

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CULTURE, TOURISM AND ENTERPRISE AD HOC PANEL - CULTURAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

11.00am 19 MAY 2010

CONFERENCE ROOM 2, JUBILEE LIBRARY

MINUTES

Present: Councillor

Also in attendance: Councillor Davis, Fryer and C Theobald

Other Members present: Councillors

PART ONE

12. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

A. Declaration of substitutes

No substitutes are permitted

B. Declaration of interests

There were none.

C. Declaration of party whip

There was none.

D. Exclusion of press and public

There was no reason to exclude the press and public.

13. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair, Councillor Melanie Davis welcomed everyone to the meeting. This was the third public evidence session and the Panel was planning to hold one more round-table meeting on 30 June 2010.

14. MINUTES

The draft minutes were agreed.

15. WITNESSES

Pippa Smith, Head of Learning, Access and Participation, Brighton Dome and Festival

Ms Smith outlined some of the work they do with children and young people. Around 1,400 free tickets were given to primary school children for performances in the Dome. There were also specific programmes to assist young people with their GCSEs. Out of school, 100 teenagers attended the Annual Rock Shop. This was a paid-for event (£70 for 3 days culminating in a gig in the Corn Exchange) but there were bursaries available and 3 free places were also available. The Dome would ask schools if there was a particular person they felt would really benefit from the programme but were not able to afford it.

Most of the events in the Children's Festival were reasonably priced at around £7. 'Adopt an Author' was a free project where a class were in contact with an author from January to May and then met them during the Festival in May. Moulseccomb Junior School had been one of the schools involved and had a great time with their author. The best authors were those who really engaged with the children and asked for their opinions on what could happen next etc. Adopt an Author started in Brighton & Hove and had now been rolled out nationally.

The Dome commissioned the Selfish Giant, a new orchestral commission, for the Children's Festival. It was £5 per ticket and 1,200 people attended the performance in the Dome. La La Luna, a circus based performance, was quick expensive but they did free shows in three primary schools. I Malvolio had performed in City College, Longhill and Dorothy Stringer Schools.

There was a successful pilot outreach project with young offenders where they produced a play called 'Trapped'. Following on from this, Ms Smith had a new member of staff, Rebecca Fidler (who devised the project that produced 'Trapped'), and Ms Fidler would be working with Jo Bates of the Youth Offending Team and Adam Joolia of AudioActive to build on the work of the project.

Following a question, Ms Smith commented that she was probably most proud of the Children's Festival as she had helped devise it. In the past, there had been the criticism that the festival ended when the parade ended, but now there was much more to the children's festival. There was also more work with young offenders. Ms Smith also cited the example of Rock Shop as a brilliant project. The Learning, Access and Participation Team was also now more integrated in the rest of the Dome which was great progress for the team.

A question was asked about how schools were chosen for particular projects and Ms Smith replied they took advice from others (such as Jo Bates in the Youth Offending Team and Adam Joolia of AudioActive). They had asked which schools were only doing basic PE when they were looking for schools to work with Hofesh Shechter. To encourage teachers to engage with their projects, the Dome had allocated 15 free places for teachers to attend the Hofesh Shechter performance this weekend. For the Adopt an Author project, they wrote to all schools and asked them to pitch for an author: often it was the same schools who replied but they were careful to not always select the same schools.

The point was made that it is important to start early and reach young children. This was where Arts Champions in schools can have an important role. Adam Joolia remarked that it can take up to 12 weeks before young people develop a respect and interest in a project and by then, it was ending.

Adam Joolia, Director, AudioActive

Mr Joolia explained that AudioActive was a small and growing organisation that had been operating for 4 years. They existed to increase creative opportunities: these ranged from informal activities such as going to youth clubs, to targeted work such as art therapy. There was a wide spectrum of activities. They had a pool of 20-25 creative artists they worked with. They ran one or two open access programmes a year, either when young people suggested something, or when they spotted a gap in provision.

'Rolling Rhythms' was a project run in partnership with B&HCC Youth Service on the "Play Bus". It was an open-access project that brought activities (eg beatbox, rap, music tech etc) to primary aged children by bringing the Play Bus to their neighbourhood. These were less structured activities but more the activities children could 'bump into' and enjoy.

The Hip Hop Foundation was an open access programme that started in 2005 when the Hip Hop Festival requested more youth participation to bring different people together. The Taking Part survey noted that this sort of collaboration was more likely to engage young people from a range of different backgrounds and ages. It had been shown that involvement in projects where young people mix with a range of other young people was beneficial both culturally and socially.

Break4Change was an innovative pilot programme working with families who suffered 'child to parent abuse'. It was a partnership between the Council, the Youth and Connexions service, Rise, and the Youth Offending Team. The brief to AudioActive was to design and deliver a creative aspect to the project that would bring the two groups (children and parents) together in a creative way. They were working with groups of parents and their children using lyric writing or film projects to allow the groups to communicate with each other. This was ground-breaking work.

Youth Music Mentors started last year with funding from the Department of Children, Families and Schools (DCFS) for 2 years to train music leaders in mentoring. Music was used to reach personal goals in 1-2-1 work or in schools or in youth offending mandatory programmes. The funding was until March 2011 and looked unlikely to continue.

The Council provided funding to hold an event on Saturday nights for 13-19yr olds in the Brighton Youth Centre.

Capacity was an issue. AudioActive had been heavily reliant on Hip Hop Foundation funding but were now concentrating more on being a service provider and securing more stability and funding. They had 3 years funding from the Arts Council and would employ more staff.

B&R productions had been given a decommissioned school in Rye and AudioActive had a one year residency there. Different artists were in the school which was a 'creative centre'.

In terms of gaps in provision, there was no flagship resource with multi-disciplinary projects. There was no centrally accessible venue. The Crew Club had the best music tech facilities in the city but often people outside of Whitehawk would not go there.

Following a question on sustainability, Mr Joolia noted that there was often a gap between the end of one project and the start of the next. Resources had been focused on running one project and then at the end, they had to develop a new project. They found that those young

people who had got the most out of a project would stay in touch. AudioActive sat between arts and youth work. What young people learnt was transferable skills. Sometimes after a project literacy skills had improved (one young person asked for a thesaurus!). It provided motivation and confidence. Often the process was the key thing – rather than the end project. Getting to the end (to produce a film for example) developed critical thinking as they would be debating different issues. There was also an issue about managing expectations.

Asked about communications with different organisations, Mr Joolia explained that as it was very competitive in terms of securing funding, they were quite secretive at times to protect their ideas. However, they did communicate closely with Rhythmix. Additionally, small organisations were too busy on a daily basis to network. Mr Joolia commented that he had been surprised that, in such a creative city, there was a very small arts team in the Youth Service. The 'My Place' consultation process had lacked transparency, although this was possibly a result of people being too busy.

A centre of excellence for youth creative provision in a central location would provide a cultural coming together and would help in breaking down territorial grievances.

For AudioActive, a balance between a comprehensive programme and a varied one would be the ideal. A skeleton programme that involved people all year and one big event at the children's festival was one way forward.

Kirsty Sulston, Head of Community & Learning, South East Dance.

Ms Sulston explained that South East Dance was 1 of 10 national dance agencies in England. They had a local, regional, and national remit. They were funded by the Arts Council, with some funding from B&HCC. They aimed to raise the profile of dance and increase opportunities for all ages.

The Artists Development programme was about skilling-up the workforce. The programme was expanding and linked into digital programmes. The 'Moving Voices' project was in its third (and final) year. They worked with those who had little or no access to dance before and were trying to engage the hard-to-reach. They used dance as a way to engage: it could be photography, filming, reviewing dance or facilitating workshops.

The project had created 394 volunteering opportunities for 16-25yr olds in the south east, in the first year and 1,220 in the second year.

Big Dance South East 2010 was a national initiative started by the Arts Council. It was a region-wide programme with 6 hubs, 1 of which was in Brighton & Hove. There was a bi-annual festival on 3-11 July 2010. They were targeting the Turner area of Brighton, which was identified as a key area. Big Dance was being supported by celebrity 'Dance Champions'.

South East Dance had a long history of working with at-risk young people. They were committed to working in communities through dance. The East Brighton Dance Development Programme ran from 2002-2006 and was funded by Positive Futures and eb4U. It aimed to inspire residents of east Brighton to take part in dance activity regardless of age or ability. One legacy from that project was the creation of the Dance Development Officer within Brighton & Hove Music, Arts and Study Support (BHMAS).

'Moving Voices' was a volunteer project which had set up youth dance communities to hear from young people. They worked with partners and gatekeepers such as the Turner Children's Center to find young people who were not currently accessing dance. They advertised that these opportunities were free – and expenses can be paid.

Partnership working was key to success. One challenge was a dedicated space for dance (eg Circus Street). They worked across the city in different centres but often space is not fit for purpose. B&H has a vibrant community so it was important to provide space here.

The comment was made that it was about long term investment. The work in East Brighton had paved the way for inhabitants to come to the Hofesh Shechter at the Dome. Development and progression was key – and slow.

Kate Rouse, Jubilee and Central Services Manager, Libraries and Information Service, B&HCC

Ms Rouse explained that the library service provided a cradle to grave service. The development of literacy skills was at the heart of their work. They introduced children to the written word and other cultural activities. In 2009-10 they held 1,380 events for children and young people (up to 18yrs), and the total number in this age range attending was nearly 30,000. In the latest CIPFA survey the children's library services received the second highest satisfaction rating in the country. Many of the activities were done in partnership with others and they continued to expand these partnerships. In the last year, the service had been key partners in the development of a city-wide Reading Strategy and this was encouraging literacy at all ages.

When babies' births were registered, the parent/s received information about Book Start. This was a national scheme where children were given packs of books at three different times up to age 3yrs. The Book Ahead scheme loaned books on a termly basis to early years establishments. This involved outreach work and helped to engage adults – it is crucial to engage adults if children were to also engage with reading. The Baby Boogie and Rhythm sessions were very popular and helped develop skills for babies through music and rhyme. For older children, there was the Summer Reading Challenge and in 2009 1,608 children took part. The libraries also ran drop-in homework clubs that were free, voluntary and open to all children. There were dedicated computers in the libraries and research indicated that many of those who used these computers, did not have broadband at home.

Libraries held activities targeted at 16-19 yr olds, including those who were NEET. Joining procedures had also been changed to allow those children in care, who may not have long-term fixed addresses, to join the library by giving the Council as a guarantor.

As part of the Reading Strategy, there was a project with Patcham High School to target 250 children with special educational needs. This project was now being evaluated.

In terms of future development areas or gaps, libraries were very good at reaching young children but there was a gap from 12yrs old onwards. To address this, there was now a Wii wall at Jubilee Library. There had also been a number of vacancies but they were currently recruiting. There was no dedicated funding officer. The nature of library services was that they operated on a voluntary drop-in basis so it was difficult to target specific groups. They were aware of the need to work more closely with others to identify those children with specific

needs. The question of time and resources was a difficult one but there were 8.5 FTE staff in the Children and Young People's team.

Following questions, Ms Rouse confirmed that at the start of an academic year there was an influx of foreign students and they worked hard to explain what services they offered. Ms Rouse emphasised that they do not teach children how to read but offer the facilities to read. In response to a question on arts champions in schools, Ms Rouse noted that this network was not one that worked for them but the new officer will be working with schools in the city.

Julia Basnett, Museums' Learning Manager, Royal Pavilion & Museums, B&HCC

Ms Basnett explained that the schools programme was huge. There were only 2 national performance indicators which covered schools visits and early years visits. Schools often used the service for arts based projects but they did science and history too. Last year around 43,000 children visited the museums. The funding was from the Renaissance fund from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and they were very reliant on this funding stream. There was now a Schools Officer funded by this.

There were currently arts, design and craft workshops on the subject "From Sickert to Gertler" that were aimed at secondary schools and were doing very well. This was helped by a dedicated officer. Ms Basnett told the Panel that they worked mainly with primary schools and it was much harder to get into secondary schools. They had set up a focus group with secondary schools and the teachers were keen but there were practical difficulties. One example of this was timetable cover: supply staff were required to cover staff who are out on visits (it is no longer permissible to use internal staff to cover teachers out of schools). For primary schools, the biggest issue was the cost of coaches but they still had a lot of visits. The target this year was to attract schools who hadn't been for a while.

In Hove, there was the 'Precious' exhibition which involved project board work in schools and they all made birds as part of the exhibition. This also meant that the children all wanted to come to the museum to see their bird on display. The Painting Rehang was another successful project. There were a wide range of activities in the children and families programme including Divali Festival, and Chinese New Year.

Ms Basnett commented that it was hard to get people out of the city centre. The 'Meet the Reptiles' in the Booth Museum attracted a lot of people but that was an external project. No other project really attracted large numbers of people. They were also aware that they were attracting the same people to events across the city.

There was some work undertaken with Victoria & Albert (V&A) funding where secondary schools did a fashion show from recycled clothing which ended up in the V&A. However, they did tend to suffer from only working with schools that got back to them and only some schools did come forward. They were not working with the arts champions. There was a Brighton Art & Design Network of art and design teachers and they worked directly with them. The network was an informal one that met once a term.

Cardinal Newman had a funded post. Patcham High no longer worked with them. Portslade Community College turned down the offer to work with the museums service as they had a policy of not leaving the premises.

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In Early Years establishments, there was a Renaissance-funded post and they took items into children's centres. Around 3,000 under 5yr olds had been in contact with the museums service, mainly through children's centres.

In response to questions, Ms Basnett noted that they did not get information to parent/s at birth. It was also an interesting idea for Hove Museum to potentially pick up on some of the overspill from Baby Boogie.

Donna Close (Arts Development Officer for B&HCC) explained that the Arts Champion was a very informal role. The database came out of the Express Strategy but as there had been no central co-ordinating role, it was ad-hoc. However, a co-ordinating role was being built into the job description for the person who would be covering Lucy Jefferies sabbatical. This person would work as a children's co-ordinator. It had also been agreed that a member of Ms Smith's team at the Dome, and a member of Peter Chivers team at BHMAS would work with the new post to re-look at the Express Strategy. The bid for funding was due in by November.

Ms Basnett told the committee that they held workshops and talked to schools directly to encourage them to attend. Additionally, in the past, Renaissance funding had been used to cover supply teachers. This was expensive but it was all about building relationships.

It was agreed that communication was crucial and that it may be a recommendation that a network was formed as part of the refresh of the Express Strategy.

The Chair thanked all the witnesses for a most interesting and informative meeting.

16. DATE OF FUTURE MEETING

The next meeting was a round table meeting on 30 June 2010 at 4pm.

17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

The meeting concluded at 1.00pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of